

Clas. Davis
BURTON-WOOD.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

B Y A L A D Y.

VOLUME I.

L O N D O N.

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B Y

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MDCCLXXXIII.



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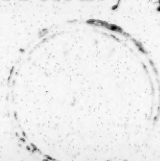
ISLAND

Colonel BEVILLE to Mr. HUDSON.

Burton Wood.

IT is once more permitted thy friend to call upon Hudson for his congratulations. — Yes, my dear Tom, I am at last arrived in poor Old England. Believe me, the sight of Albion's chalky cliffs caused sensations which the finest descriptive talents would be unequal to. — To see this revered isle (after five years absence) struggling under the arbitrary power of

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BURTON WOOD.

civil discord, as well as the united attempts of several mighty nations; — to behold it in this light, (from the accounts transmitted to me,) occasioned pangs (if the expression may be allowed) almost infernal. But no sooner was I landed than the heart-reviving intelligence met my ear, that our sacred king had given way to the paternal impulse of his glorious humanity, and granted, to the earnest intreaties of a loyal and affectionate people, the nearest wish of their hearts. — Good God! 'tis impossible to express my feelings! No Roman patriot ever welcomed the deliverer of his country with half that enthusiastic zeal with which thy friend received the life-restoring information: I was almost frantic, and, in powerful libations to the god of wine, expressed my turbulent joy. — But, to be serious, I have a strong pre-sentiment this
favourable

favourable change in the ministry will be productive of every happy consequence which followed that important manœuvre in the glorious *fifty-nine*. — Courage, my boy; one noble soul, who pants to preserve his sacred liberty, is equal to a thousand cold-hearted wretches, who engage merely as mercenaries, and at the instigation of despotic tyranny. Can that unhappy creature fight with spirit to defend those domains he must cultivate with slavish toil, or hold at the capricious pleasure of an absolute monarch? Of what consequence is it to him whether governed by a native or a foreigner, since, let the fortune of the day decide for either, still slavery must be his bitter lot? But Britons, free-born Britons,
(Oh! catch th' inspiring sound, responsive air,)
disdain to hold their patrimony by such a capricious tenure.

So much had this darling subject animated me as to produce the following lines. — Certainly, your friend is no poet, and may stand excused for the errors too visible in the imperfect piece.

Britons, rejoice; for lo! th' important hour
Draws on, destructive to despotic pow'r!
Sweet Hope illumines the genius of our isle,
Again she cheers us with her radiant smile.
Patriots, stand forth; those sacred rights attest
Which nobly warm'd each glowing Roman breast.
'Tis liberty, (inspiring awful sound!)
For glorious liberty, our chiefs renown'd
With ardor fight.—Shall, then, our senates prove
For sinking Britain a less ardent love?
Shall they, with whom it rests to save a state,
By mean cabals, retard its glorious fate?
Say, can you hear your bleeding country's plea,—
Oppressive taxes, chilling poverty,
The widow's plaint, the orphan's helpless cries,
Pale meagre want, and all those ills that rise

From

From wrong-concerted plans, and (dare I say)
From int'rests opposite, and base delay ?
Oh no ; our senators will nobly plead
Their country's cause, and in that cause succeed.
Each patriot shall eagerly combine
To realise again the glorious *fifty-nine*.

AND now a truce with politics ; something of a domestic nature may be quite as agreeable. — Stopping to refresh, on the road to London, I willingly indulged a contemplative fit which seized me near Shooter's-Hill. My meditations were interrupted by a fine martial figure, riding slowly towards me. But, heavens ! what were my sensations when I recognised my revered friend, lieutenant Stanley ! He flew from his horse, and almost inarticulately welcomed me to England. After our mutual transports were tolerably subsided, he insisted upon my accompanying

nim to a sweet retreat, in the Wilds of Kent, and from this lovely spot I write. Need thy Beville say, nothing can induce him to regret the protraction of his journey but an earnest wish to rejoice with his affectionate Hudson. Adieu, Tom. Ever yours,
FRANCIS BEVILLE.

MR. MARSHALL to Mr. STANLEY.

London.

I AM miserable — miserable in the most extensive sense of the word. — I have offended beyond retribution. — 'Tis impossible my guardian, my friend, and protector, can forgive the wretch who has slighted his counsels, thrown away his bounty, and is reduced, by a cursed infatuation, to a state much lower, because many degrees more contemptible, than
that

that from which that generous protector raised him.— Can you bear with patience to be told, I was last night drawn in to accompany Seldon to the gaming-table, and was, by that mercenary monster, plundered of my Stanley's noble present.— Nothing remains, after this confession, but to bury myself in obscurity, or to apply to that common receptacle of extravagance and dissipation the seas, and, in the laborious service of a common seaman, do penance for this last inexcusable weakness.

Adieu, thou best of men.

W. MARSHALL.

Licht. STANLEY to M. MARSHALL.

Burton-Wood.

MY soul feels for thee, William.— Distress undoubtedly dictated thy melancholy epistle.—I mean not to wound

thy sensibility. — Warmly alive to the feelings of ingenuous shame, great must have been thy sufferings. — Forgive me, Marshall, I am above reproach; but, my unhappy young friend, permit me just to observe, a propensity to gaming is fatally productive of the heaviest evils. He, whose bosom never harboured an ungenerous thought, may, by that infernal fascination, be brought to the commission of crimes horrible to mention. Already has the hateful vice betrayed thee to an abjectness of spirit never before discoverable in my dear mistaken William. — What a penance for thy folly is the bare confession of this weakness? — Mention it no more; there is still a noble reparation in thy power. — Shun the gaming-table and its dangerous frequenters, and thou wilt be dearer to me than ever. — Poor is the pittance of thy

Stanley.

Stanley, but thou shalt share the humble stipend. — Inclosed is a very small token of my love; to accept it is all I ask. — Your participating friend blushes at the offer which prudence circumscribes. — But thou knowest the mind and situation of the poor lieutenant, therefore I will not farther apologise. — Come to Burton-wood; the amiable colonel Beville has condescended to honour the cottage of his friend: — You will complete the happy trio. — Come, then, and give pleasure to H. S.

MARSHALL to STANLEY.

London.

THY unexpected generosity overwhelms me. — Gratitude excites sensations equal to those arising from deserved distress. — But ah! my revered friend, can
I accept

I accept an invitation which increases the weight of unreturnable obligations? Will can a feeling mind support the oppressive load which the heart of Marshall sustains, from a due sense of thy goodness. — No, 'tis impossible to encounter the mild eye of my virtuous Stanley. — The colonel, too! — Can his dignity submit to an equality with the dependent of his friend? It must not be. — I know thy excellence. — I have experienced Mr. Beville's politeness, but he knew not, perhaps, how much I owed to my generous friend. He might not know, that, deserted by a parent, you was my sole support; and that to a benevolence most exemplary I am indebted for the distinguished attention which a public knowledge of the uncertainty of my origin had deprived me of. — Forgive, O my friend, this

this refusal, which arises from reasons that may not always subsist.

Ever yours,

W. MARSHALL.

Mr. HUDSON to Colonel BEVILLE.

London.

WELCOME, thrice welcome, to the hospitable shores of Albion. Five years absence has increased the warmth of a long-ripened friendship, which feels itself highly gratified at this opportunity of pouring forth the effusions of a heart so much my Beville's. — But there is no happiness without alloy; that which I have impatiently waited for brings with it a mortification not to be alleviated. — No sooner did I congratulate myself on your much wished for arrival, than I was summoned to
join

join my regiment at Portsmouth. — Grateful is the summons to an aspiring mind, — and highly grateful would be an interview with my friend. Surely within one month I shall enjoy that pleasure. It will be long after that time ere I can experience the felicity of conveying my sentiments to you even by letter, as we shall embark for the East-Indies. — Apropos, I have much to say upon the subject you treated with such spirit. — Certainly, it is almost impossible to correspond with a friend without entering upon political affairs. Even you, dear Frank, have contributed to establish the truth of this sentiment by your liberal eulogium upon a late manoeuvre. But you must permit me to observe, it is a common supposition that the temper of the English is perfectly unequal to the various vicissitudes so often attendant on those who are
subject

subject to the calamities of war. The present situation of things positively evinces the truth of this hypothesis. — Every favourable article of intelligence is received with uncommon exultation; the coffee-houses are thronged with impatient mortals, whose enquiring faces and eager attention precisely determine how highly they rate their sanguine expectations; while the importance of those, who have already attained the wished-for information, appears in a consequential strut and features ready to burst, from a sense of their lately-acquired dignity; and they may probably answer the earnest enquirer with an — “Oh, sir, we have gained a very valuable acquisition; we have humm’d the monfieurs, fairly taken them in, faith; — they must lower their flower de luce. — The Spaniard

“ niard may curl his whiskers, and the
“ Dutchman settle his trowsers, but, in
“ spite of the triple alliance, Old England
“ will be too hard for them all.” — Now
mark the change. — We are worried, per-
haps, in a naval engagement, or lose an
island in the West-Indies. — All is gloomy
silence. — Notice the contracted brow and
dejected posture. — Should any inquisitive
person ask the cause, — a melancholy shake
of the head, perhaps a heavy sigh, is the
prelude to an answer vague and unsatisfac-
tory. —

Is the picture natural? I think we are
all subject, more or less, to this mutability.
Equanimity is the certain sign of a great soul.
Why, then, should Englishmen give the on-
ly proof of a deficiency in that respect? —
Yourself, my dear colonel, must not de-
pend

pend too much on the change in ministry. I, as well as you, most fervently rejoice at a removal so essentially necessary in the present situation of affairs : but remember at what a disadvantage they have taken upon themselves the important trust ; remember what enemies they have to cope with, national as well as foreign. Strong parties will be formed against them. Every accidental omission will be deemed neglect, and the merit of every prudent and successful manœuvre lessened, by those whose malevolence no brilliant talents can soften nor perfection itself remove. — My bosom is strongly impressed by that patriotic glow you so feelingly describe, and most devoutly do I wish for an opportunity to prove the sincerity of my declaration. — Soon, very soon, may our ardent hopes be verified.

May

May the counsels of our senates and the arduous efforts of those who bravely expose their lives to the most imminent dangers attain the glorious point they aim at, and secure, to their king and country, the certain continuance of honour and liberty. May they *indeed* effectually humble our enemies, and preserve to ourselves that sacred freedom which has hitherto baffled the futile attempts of mighty nations. — Be careful, O ye Englishmen, of your invaluable privileges and immunities. Extinguish that implacable party-spirit which lays ye too open to the designs of corrupted traitors. — Once firmly united, the joint force of Europe you may laugh at, and, invincibly secured by your heroic courage and exalted wisdom, be the wonder and envy of an astonished world. — —

You

You will certainly think me animated by the subject. — Be it so. — The matter I have touched upon always raises me above myself. — Adieu, dear Frank: hasten your departure from the cottage, as my stay will be very precarious.

Yours,
THOMAS HUDSON.

Colonel BEVILLE to Mr. HUDSON.

Burton-Wood.

STANLEY's Maria is an angel! — Oh no, she is lovely mortal woman! and, were she ought but the *wife* of my *friend*, this heart would feel her power. As it is, thy Beville dare not encounter the mild radiance of her love-inspiring eyes. — Seldom, indeed, is my fortitude put to the test. — Her impassioned glances are totally reserved

for the happy Stanley. — Yes, she adores him, and is by him adored. — Superior to any trifling coquettish arts, she scorns to practise those reprehensible airs which even virtuous wives too commonly indulge. — God of celestial purity, continue the felicity of this amiable pair! — Perish the narrow-minded wretch who could one moment indulge a selfish wish for the disturbance of such happiness. — How would your notions of matrimonial delicacy receive confirmation from the behaviour of the virtuous Maria! Delightful it is to observe the transports of the admiring husband so sweetly contrasted by the chastened deportment of the blooming wife,—

(O Virtue! thine is the triumph!)

while love sublime sits refulgent in the modest eye.—With amiable reluctance does she permit

mit the ardent endearments of the enraptured Henry. — Yet is not this woman a dazzling beauty. — I have seen external charms infinitely superior to those of Maria. But there is a nameless something, an inexpressible sweetness, which graces her every action, gives irresistible energy to all she says, and animates every feature of a countenance absolutely fascinating. — In short, there is a *je ne sais quoi* throughout her whole person that renders her exquisitely pleasing, and does credit to the taste of my excellent friend. — Often am I called upon to share the felicity of this inestimable pair. — And I do share it. — Never was there a fairer prospect of permanent felicity than in this auspicious union. Never may that blighting mildew, Envy, with her invenomed tooth, destroy a happiness so unparalleled!

I SHALL now advert to the only part of your letter which gives me pain. — After so long an absence, must I again bear the torment of vainly wishing for my friend's society? Surely the pleasures of this life come to us with such a mixture of pain as plainly precludes a certain dependence on ought below. This reflection may appear uncharacteristic in me. But I feel myself greatly disappointed. — My hospitable friend would have engaged me for two months: your hasty departure will make it impossible to comply with his generous wishes. In one fortnight I hope to embrace the friend of his

F. BEVILLE.

Mr.

Mr. HUDSON to Col. BEVILLE.

London.

UPON my soul, Frank, your last epistle was so exceedingly dolorous as to excite the most violent propensity to — risibility. — By all that's valiant, I will hear no more of your *virtuous exclamations* and *tender rhapsodies*, which seem to breathe the spirit of whining effeminacy rather than the warlike effusions of a foldier. — And for whom do you make yourself (I was going to say) ridiculous? — Why, for the *wife* of your *friend*. — She is the object which has wrought the deplorable transformation. Rouse, rouse, Beville, shake off this lethargy of honour, and be again the man. — The roughness with which I treat your disorder is in character, from a son of Mars, who feels the slightest deviation from honour

in his friend.—I would much rather see your letters filled with descriptions of dangers escaped, of marches and countermarches, evolutions, charges, manœuvres, ravelins, fosse, and every technical term in fortification, than such puling nonsense.—I must laugh, faith, Frank, I must.—You cannot be offended, if one spark of friendship be left in that altered bosom. In the name of Venus, has your fortitude taken a flight to the Cyprian regions, and converted your sword into a distaff, for the sake of your Iole? I swear, if a hecatomb of female hearts was offered to my choice, I would slight the precious sacrifice, and prefer the company of a gallant veteran to that of the most beautiful creature existing.—Mistake not my principles, I revere the ladies, but never shall their caprices and pretty follies induce

“Othello to forget his occupation.”

— Think you our brave heroes could have achieved such fame, had they been under the influence of the *tender passion*? No, no, Beville, their hearts were steel'd against every soft emotion of love. — Out upon the word, I shall not endure it, since my friend has professed himself a votary to the whimsical god. — The only reparation you can make, for a weakness so repugnant (I would hope) to your principles, is, never more to hurt the feelings of your Hudson by a confession so blameable.

WHEN I expected to hear what success had flowed from the alteration in state-affairs, you tell me of the angelic perfections of Mrs. Stanley; and, instead of liberal encomiums on the conduct of the new ministry, have employed your pen in decanting on the person and manners of the lieutenant's wife. Shame! Shame! — Is

this the man whose glowing patriotism produced the warmest expressions of loyalty to his king and affection to his country? Never mention this affair, my dear mistaken friend, unless from proper motives. — I will change the subject. — We have, on board the ship I am to sail in, a person, who, at the age of fifty years, (thirty of which have been spent in the navy,) ranks as midshipman. — His merit has gained him the esteem of those who move within *his* confined circle. — Yet is the man but a *midshipman*! Oh scandal to the British nation! Shall we, whose courage and spirit set us above the most powerful competitors, shall we permit distressed worthies to struggle against undeserved poverty? — Would to God this evil was rectified. It gives me pain to behold an experienced officer

officer abjectly submitting to those who can claim no other superiority than the adventitious enjoyment of friends and fortune.— Grant, heaven, our gracious sovereign may one day take into consideration the case of these brave though unfortunate veterans.— You, who are but lately arrived from abroad, will scarcely think it credible, that some of our naval beaux will absolutely tread, in courtly state, the quarter-deck, sheltered, in the latitude of *fifty* or *fifty-one*, from Apollo's *scorching rays*, by the comfortable protection of an enormous umbrella.— I speak what I know to be fact.

“ To you, ye delicate blossoms of
“ nature, I apply; ye who could not be
“ designed to face the death-dealing instru-
“ ments of war.— Ye sons of powder,
“ (not gunpowder) and pomatum, well
“ may

“ may ye wish to fence the tender brain
“ by such unmanly methods, and, since
“ nothing so effectually deadens the force
“ of a cannon-ball as a woolpack, ye may
“ certainly bid defiance to those messengers
“ of destruction.—My heart revolts against
“ these self-admirers. — Nor is there any
“ object more unnatural and disagree-
“ able than a salt-water beau. — Return
“ (at least while in your duty) to plain
“ unpowdered locks, and the decent ap-
“ paratus of the sons of Neptune. Surely,
“ the effluvia of pitch and tar can by no
“ means agree with the delicate scent of
“ Warren’s jessamine powder! — How
“ painful to consider, that, while the no-
“ ble admiral fears nor death nor danger,
“ some of his officers, at least, may be
“ more anxious about the disposition of
“ their

“ their ornaments than the fate of a battle.
 “ Even those ladies you are so solicitous
 “ to please, will receive more pleasure, I
 “ will venture to affirm, from the appearance
 “ of unornamented valour, than from
 “ the most finished beau the navy can produce.
 “ — Take, then, the hint, from a
 “ rough unpolished soldier, and reform
 “ that exceptionable part of your conduct,
 “ which lays ye open (I speak from certain
 “ knowledge) to the ridicule of your
 “ equals in command, many of whom are
 “ above the feminine arts of adorning a
 “ person which must be exposed to extreme
 “ danger. — There are yet examples
 “ enough, one would imagine, to shame
 “ you into a sense of your fault. — So
 “ much does the spirit of liberty operate
 “ in my bosom, that I cannot bear to give
 “ an

“ an enemy reason to reflect upon the conduct of those who are intrusted with the fate of thousands.”—— Well, Frank, what say you to my apostrophe?— Does not this matter strike you in the same light? Let me not be thought severe upon our officers; there are numbers who are the glory of their country, and, shall I say, the protectors of liberty.— But, indeed, the evil complained of seems to be increasing to a very exceptionable degree. Let those, who feel themselves aggrieved, answer me.— Adieu Beville, follow my example in the length of your next.— Say what you please respecting your situation, — but not one word of *love*.

T. H.

P. S. I meant to touch upon the characters of our brave common sailors, as we call them

them — but reserve their eulogium for a future epistle.

Colonel BEVILLE to Mr. HUDSON.

Burton Wood.

I Am much obliged to you, Tom, for your unambiguous reflections on my conduct. — Now, if I had not changed the sword for the distaff, as you emphatically represent it, I might possibly take my flight to London, and seek reparation for my affronted honour. — One virtue you will not deny me, — that of submitting to the correction of a friend. — To speak truly, your remonstrances, though tinged with rather too much acidity, were perfectly in character, and received with friendship. — But one point I will insist upon, — however the warmth of imagination

tion

tion may have painted the charms of a woman I am forbidden to mention, I am still, in every sense of the word, *a soldier*. — There is your dependence: fix it firmly. Never will Hudson have cause to repent that dependence. —

Your strictures are pretty severe upon the gentlemen of the navy; but is there nothing objectionable among the gentry in your line? I will take upon me to say, there is something of that evil in our camps as well as in our ports. Perhaps you will urge, in excuse for them, that the gaiety of their dress is greatly owing to its colour, and that exact neatness is expected from them. I will not contest the point, but observe, that, while the ladies are so extremely partial to a red coat, we are not to wonder at the splendor of our ensigns,

lieu-

lieutenants, &c. who dazzle the eyes and fetter the hearts of those dear creatures that have not strength of mind to resist such superficial attractions. —

You ask me for political intelligence. — By my honour, Tom, we seem more perplexed than ever. Although I am tempted to hope, in the warmth of patriotic preference, that the day is not far distant when every wish of the British heart shall be realised; when this war-worn country shall rest her languid head upon the bosom of that enchanting stranger, Peace; when Commerce shall again emerge from the cruel state of oppression she has so long endured; and the glorious consequences of a much wished for unity shall spread through this (then) happy island. — Who can behold without pain the humiliating deprivation

deprivation of those advantages which, for ages back, have rendered us the boast of friends and the terror of our enemies? advantages which have impowered this country to become the mighty arbitrator between nations more extensive than itself. What is England compared with Russia? whose vast domains extend from the temperate zone to the frozen regions of the North. — France and Spain, with all their acquisitions in the West, are not nor ever will be a match for us. — Oh for the decisive stroke which shall level the presumptuous hope of contending powers, whose combined forces have hitherto proved insufficient to humble, much less conquer, this epitome of Roman spirit. — I am aware you will judge me rather sanguine

guine in my prognostications ; but mark the event.

Adieu, dear Tom, I shall follow this letter immediately to London.

F. B.

From the Same to the Same.

London.

I COULD almost execrate the occasion which deprived me of the felicity, so earnestly expected, of enjoying one hour's conversation with my Hudson. — Cruel fate ! to protract your departure to the very moment in which, impelled by ardent hope, I hastened to meet thee ! Surely *one day* might have been allowed to friendship's claim. — But I retract, well knowing, a powerful sense of duty to your country

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ever outweighed your private affections. — There is now no alleviation but from a continuance of that correspondence which will, I fear, from the immense distance, be rendered very precarious.

My departure from Burton Wood was pathetically deplored by my inestimable friends. Stanley accompanied me twenty miles, and then returned to the arms of — “ Oh, Tom, that way madness lies! —

You remember an agreeable youth whom Stanley avowed himself the guardian of: I am much mistaken if he prove not a source of trouble to my valuable friend, who, with all his good qualities, had ever a strong propensity to the romantic. This turn of mind lays him open to the deep designs of narrow-minded mortals, whose contracted notions too often induce them to
miscon-

misconceive the generous motives which actuate a benevolent soul. With these sordid wretches, enlarged and liberal sentiments imply weakness of intellects, or, at best, an indiscriminate good-nature, acting with equal power in favour of every object, without considering what claim those objects may have upon the humanity of the person in question. — Indeed, there are people enough of this cast to strengthen a low-minded person in his illiberal judgment; and to such wretches is the peace and happiness of a noble spirit too often sacrificed. — That the mind of Marshall is tinctured with this meanness I do not positively assert, but, from a minute disquisition of his sentiments, appearing in some of his epistles to Stanley, I have every reason for adopting the above unfavourable

construction. The manner of Marshall's receiving some obligations, lately conferred on him by his generous guardian, grounds me in these suspicions. — Be it as it may, I will endeavour to investigate his conduct, so far as it relates to my worthy friend.

F. B.

MARIA

MARIA STANLEY to Mrs. STANLEY, Sen.

Burton Wood.

WILL my revered mother yet stand out against the dutiful wishes of her Maria? Supremely distinguished in the society of an adoring husband and angelic infant, why may not her happiness be complete? — Can the venerable parent of my Henry withhold the blessing of her invaluable presence from a son and daughter who zealously wish to smoothe the rugged path of declining life, to calm each anxious thought of futurity, and gild the evening of a well-spent life? — Blessed employment! — How ardently could I petition heaven to annihilate the hours which intervene between me and such felicity! My heart beats high with expectation.

Realise, my dearest madam, the pleasing hopes which animate my glowing bosom. Your little cherub, with infantine endearments, will welcome his other parent. — Could you, at this moment, behold the smiling infant, in the arms of its delighted father, catching at the happy mother's pen, how would your maternal goodness be affected by the little domestic groupe. Deprive not yourself of this rapturous satisfaction. Relinquish not those pure pleasures which are among the few that lessen not by fruition, and that encrease by participation. Pleasures, my dear mother, which are greater in enjoyment than idea. — Come, then, thou best of women, and rejoice with your

H. and M. STANLEY.

Mrs.

Mrs. STANLEY, *Sen. to MARIA.*

Canterbury.

BLEST with the society of my inestimable children, time would flit away on downy pinions. Scarcely sensible of the inconveniences of age, I might be tempted to think life too short for the enjoyment of a happiness so exquisite; and yet such a prospect of domestic felicity as thou hast painted was too much, at the moment, for the feeble nerves of debilitated humanity. — I paused, — and wept. — Scarcely able to support my rapturous sensations, I felt, even to a degree of agony, the effects of a full and complete bliss, acting upon the almost worn-out faculties of the human heart. — And will my beloved Henry and Maria contribute, by their united efforts,

to support the aged tree, already shaken by the unsparing hand of time? Yes, 'tis sure they will. Perfectly consonant in all their actions, I shall still experience the continuance of that duty and unprecedented affection which has ever distinguished my excellent children. Soon will your grateful mother profit by the oft-repeated invitation. — Embrace my sweet boy for his happy parent,

S. STANLEY.

MARIA

MARIA STANLEY to Lady TREVOR.

Burton Wood.

WE have at last obtained the long wished-for presence of our venerable mother. — You, who know how unbounded is my dutiful affection, can hardly guess what filial transports I proved, when the chaise, which my dear Henry had taken to bring this excellent woman, drove up to the door. With what affectionate care did he support her from the carriage to the little parlour! What sweet tenderness shone in his manly countenance when he congratulated me upon her arrival. — Never did my Isabel behold a more transporting sight. We have persuaded this dear woman to accept of an apartment at Burton Wood for the remainder of her valuable

luable life. — May our cheerful assiduity contribute to protract the deprecated blow which must deprive us of such a treasure.

You have more than once requested a description of our sequestered abode; take the following imperfect view of this blooming spot. —

IMAGINE yourself situated on a majestic hill, from which you look full upon another eminence, the upper part of which is covered by a noble hanging wood, whose awful appearance strikes the mind with an inexpressible idea of sublimity. — Below these venerable elms, and near the bottom of an enchanting valley, stands a small elegant white house, but which, at this luxuriant season of the year, is almost covered by a profusion of jessamines, woodbines, and other odoriferous shrubs, that
absolutely

absolutely impregnate the air with their uncloying sweets. Through this delightful valley an impetuous stream urges its rapid course; which, rising in the bosom of the hill, (from whence you are supposed to make the above observations) runs foaming down the steepest part. A simply-constructed bridge, thrown over this river exactly opposite the cottage, greatly adds to the beauty of the scene. Willows drooping to the water's edge, and scars of rocks intersecting the line of uniformity, which would otherwise prevail in this part of the valley, form a contrast astonishingly romantic. The garden, which spreads up the acclivity behind the house, even to the tree-crowned summit, is productive of the elegant and useful. Many little serpentine walks are cut through the beautiful woods,

some

some of which are terminated by rural figures, perfectly consonant with the situation of the place. In a deep glen, at some distance from the house, embosomed in trees, stands a hermitage, formed with the strictest regard to nature. It is almost impossible to enter the awful retreat without imbibing ideas agreeable to the solemn gloom which spreads a deep shade upon the few surrounding objects. The distant sound of falling waters has a fine effect, just upon this spot.

THE prospects from these hills are strikingly beautiful; the scenes luxuriantly rich, and delightfully variegated. Often, in this sweet retreat, do I contemplate the virtues of my dear lady Trevor. To the right, from the house, you command a distant view of the sea. Thro' an aperture to the left,

left, formed by those excrescences of nature, as some author calls hills and mountains, the prospect terminates in verdurous pastures, fruitful corn fields, elegant villas, and rural farm-houses.—Adieu, my beloved Isabel; our most affectionate remembrances attend Sir James and the friend of ever yours,

M. STANLEY.

Lady TREVOR

Lady TREVOR to MARIA STANLEY.

Paris.

MANY thanks to my dear Maria for her lively description of Burton Wood. I could almost fancy myself upon the charming spot from whence those delectable scenes are taken which you so sweetly depict. Would to heaven fancy could so far realise my earnest wishes as to transport me from this land of dance and song to the mild rational pleasures of that delightful solitude. But alas! that happy period is far distant.—Sir James pursues with too great avidity those fascinating delights (which so much entangle the dissipated soul) to give way, even for one moment, to those sweet desires which must naturally arise in the breast of the long-absent

absent traveller. — See, my friend, your lively Isabel can be very serious. But indeed I feel undefcribable emotions when home, with all it's domestic charms, presses upon a heart wearied with pleasure, I should rather say, gaiety. — O the delightful transport to contemplate, though but in idea, the social fire-side, the convivial party, or familiar conversation of well-tried friends, and what are justly called the elegant refinements of life ! We may be elated with the splendor of an illuminated dome, magnificent dresses, brilliant bons mots, and all those pretty trifles which chain down the thoughtless mind to the groveling scenes ; — but what a deplorable vacuum do they leave ! what a lifeless languor ! I speak from experience. — How often, in the midst of the sprightly dance,

splendid

splendid company, and the most enchanting pleasures, have I sighed for the sweet solitude of Harcourt-Place. Yes, dear Maria, lively and spirited as I am thought, this heart ever retained a just sense of *real pleasure*, and I returned from balls and masquerades with encreasing relish for the mild endearing comforts of a sentimental society.

WHAT an addition to your happiness is the company of the good Mrs. Stanley!—Seldom it is that extreme age can accommodate itself to the spirited liveliness of youthful society, or that a youthful society should think the presence of extreme age a valuable acquisition.—But see we not an exception to these positions in Mrs. Stanley and those she honours with her conversation? Nothing but extreme affection for my

my husband detains me from the happy family at Burton Wood; nay, I sometimes threaten him with an elopement. — He smiles at my threats, and tells me patience is seldom found in a lady's possession, therefore, he thinks my character will shine with unparalleled lustre when 'tis known I am a complete adept in that exemplary virtue. — Deserves he not punishment for imagining it barely possible I can sit easy under such disagreeable circumstances? — How shall I inflict it? — Why, by quietly submitting to my hard fate, and so depriving him of his triumph. Adieu, my dearest; you see I conclude in character, lest you should imagine I have employed an amanuensis. Sir James joins in the kindest compliments to yourself and family with yours, affectionately,

I. T.

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MARIA

MARIA STANLEY to Lady TREVOR.

Burton Wood.

A CIRCUMSTANCE has occurred this morning which alarmed me exceedingly. — Walking with my Stanley, near our favourite stream, we observed a horse descending the opposite hill with amazing swiftness; he came close to the river-side, and we discerned a magnificent side-saddle on his back, and a rich slipper fastened in the stirrup. — Terrified for the fate of the unfortunate rider, my husband flew to the bridge, and took the path by which the horse had descended. — I followed, but with far less speed. — Arrived near the top of that tremendous eminence, I perceived Stanley, at a small distance, supporting an elegant figure in a superb riding habit. —

She

She appeared ready to faint. — I sprang forward to assist her, — but, good God, what were my emotions to behold the very woman I had innocently deprived of happiness and Stanley! — That very Anna Stockley whose seductive charms have fascinated youth and age! — You know not, my Isabel, that by her means we had every reason to suppose ourselves deprived of general A——'s protection and fortune. — But more of this hereafter. — Mechanically, as it were, I turned with silent terror and confusion from the distressed object. — My dearest love, assist this unfortunate lady, was the excellent Henry's tender request. — No injuries, however recent or consequential, can shut his eyes or steel his heart to distress. — Roused by the affectionate sounds, I drew near, and, with

tolerable presence of mind, assiduously attended this formidable woman. — It was with the utmost difficulty we reached the cottage, when she thanked us in *such terms* ! — What pity so sweet a creature should not possess a mind as exalted as her manners are engaging !

I WILL now explain the mystery hinted at above. — When Stanley first came to England, he was introduced by the general, his uncle, to Miss Stockley, and was exceedingly charmed with her engaging sprightliness and fine person ; — the intimacy had subsisted for some time, when fate ordained thy friend (for it was prior to his knowledge of me) to meet this amiable pair at a private ball. As my husband was not the declared lover of Miss Stockley, there was no impropriety in offering his
hand

hand for the evening to another lady. — I was the envied object of his choice. — The haughty Anna could by no means put up with the seeming insult, but immediately acquainted the general, who happened to be present, with the unintended affront she had received from his nephew. Lord A——, irritated to an extreme degree, cast the most furious glances at Henry and myself, which had no effect on my partner, but to make him still more assiduous to the happy Maria. — The cruel lady, taking advantage of the general's passion, and her own unlimited ascendancy over him, (as we have been taught to believe, and not without the strongest foundation,) persuaded him, in the hour of weakness, to disinherit his amiable nephew, for no fault but the presumption of choosing for himself. — Thus was my noble hus-

band left to struggle with undeserved poverty, which his love for me rendered a heavy evil. Often would he say, — “ But
“ for *me*, Maria would have ornamented
“ the sphere she is so brightly qualified to
“ adorn. — Alas ! must those charms,
“ those talents, be confined to domestic
“ life ? — Can the truest tenderest love
“ compensate for the deprivation of those
“ advantages she might enjoy in a more
“ illustrious situation ? — Ungenerous and
“ unkind, to keep down and obscure qualities, which, in a more exalted line,
“ would be the delight of an admiring
“ world ! ” — Thus would his fond partiality express the tenderest sentiments ever uttered by an adoring husband. — But when he saw with what cheerfulness I performed the common offices which economy

mony required, — the gloom of despondency no longer clouded his fine countenance, but happiness most strongly marked each animated feature. — The death of Mr. Burton secured his claim to Burton Wood; and in this solitary retreat we bid defiance to grandeur and poverty, with all their train of ills, — and find, in a cheerful mediocrity, that felicity so vainly pursued by those mistaken beings who hunt after happiness as if they would take her by force, not understanding the essence of what they seek, which naturally eludes the pursuit of those who urge the chase with blind rapidity.

It was the current report that Miss Stockley had made an entire conquest of the general, — and that, by way of making her amends for the disappointment she had

sustained, he offered his hand; (the general was seventy-five, Isabel,) certain it is, he left her an enormous legacy.

THIS then is a sketch of the obligation we owe to the woman who is now indebted to us for assistance and protection. — May a sense of the undeserved favour sink deep into her heart, and strikingly prove the different effects of virtuous and vicious notions acting upon minds *as* differently constructed. It is true, the death of lord A—— precludes the possibility of retribution; — but we (I say *we*, well-knowing my husband's sentiments coincide with mine) shall hope to see a revolution in her conduct, as the inhabitants of Burton Wood, may be, (I presume to suppose,) and, by the sincerity of their manners, undoubtedly are, qualified to lure the wanderer

derer back to the paths of forsaken virtue.
Dear Isabel, adieu. — After giving so
much time to my own concerns, I can only
assure you of the continuance of my love,
and that I wish all happiness to the friend of

M. STANLEY.

Miss

Miss STOCKLEY to Mrs. MONTFORD.

Burton Wood.

YES, thou dear unbelieving friend, —
Burton Wood is the residence of the
successful Anna. — You may give me credit
when I declare myself the inmate of
lieut. Stanley. — O such a well-concerted
plot! — favoured too by circumstances! —
Blessed was the smiling morn that induced
me to explore these beautiful environs. —
Peculiarly fortunate the event which
brought to my desiring eyes the graceful,
the more than fascinating, Stanley. — But
yet this triumph was not without alloy. —
Obliged at the same time to endure the
presence of the detested Maria, — nay,
more, to crouch and fawn with tame servility
almost at the feet of — O curse that
specious

specious mildness which gained the only conquest I ever wished to achieve ! — Yes, she deprived me of my glorious soldier, and *I will* be revenged. — By all the powers of the infernal deep, I swear *revenge*. — Short is thy reign, thou disturber or rather preventer of my happiness. — Small is the distance between thee and excruciating misery. — Secure thou thinkest thy present situation, — but 'tis possible a neglected rival may reach thee. — Deep, to the inmost recesses of thy unsuspecting heart, will Stockley urge the envenomed shaft. — These ravings, Montford, ask no excuse ; — they are but the repetition of what thou hast in silent pity often listened to.

It could not be that Stanley was acquainted with the successful measures I practised to be revenged for the mortifying

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ing flight ; the general certainly kept my secret ; so that the pernicious consequences seemed entirely to flow from the acrimonious spirit of irritated age. — It must be so, or he would expel, with indignation, the woman who now experiences the politest treatment from himself and wife ; — detested epithet, when applied to Maria ! — You blamed me for leaving London upon such an uncertainty, but, my girl, the event, which has hitherto exceeded my sanguine expectations, proves thy friend's skill in prescience. — Long ere this would my triumphs have been completed, had not my stay in France been so unreasonably protracted by those with whom I was not at liberty to contend. Adieu, dear Montford. With success to thy

STOCKLEY.

MARIA

MARIA STANLEY to Lady TREVOR.

Burton Wood.

OUR visitor, my dearest Isabel, is not yet departed. — So engaging is her deportment, and so sweetly complacent her manner, that, when she talks of leaving us, even our venerable mother solicits her longer stay. — That good lady is absolutely charmed with her behaviour, and declares that, out of our own family, (observe that, my friend,) she knows not her equal. — It is necessary to premise, our mother was not made acquainted with Miss Stockley's duplicity in her transactions with general A——. Stanley is prejudiced in her favour, and, I will venture to affirm, wishes to forget that strongly suspected injury attributable to her. — Amiable philanthropist,

phist, I will endeavour to profit by thy generous notions!—Indeed, Maria was never thought to possess a contracted soul; but the glorious benevolence of my husband is so unbounded, that even noble actions lessen in their influence when performed within the blaze of his exalted sphere. — You will possibly think me tinctured with that enthusiasm he so completely possesses, — but who can help adoring what is absolutely inimitable. — Revolving this part of my husband's character, I can justly apply to him what was said of the archbishop of Canterbury.—“Do my lord of Canterbury
“an ill office, and you will make him your
“friend.”—Excuse me, dear lady Trevor, but my Henry's praise is apt to run away with my pen.

WE expect this week our noble friend, colonel Beville, and poor Marshall. I
greatly

greatly fear that unhappy youth has a propensity to gaming. — Stanley lately assisted him with a considerable sum of money; but what is a limited acquisition when the wants are unbounded? My Isabel will excuse the shortness of this epistle, I will make it up in the length of my next.

Yours,

M. STANLEY.

M/s

Miss STOCKLEY to Mrs. MONTFORD.

Burton Wood.

A JOYOUS groupe is now assembled at Burton Wood. Who would suppose, by the tranquil countenances of all present, that there could be any deep designs lurking under such specious coverings? — And yet I can answer for *two*: Marshall, whom you once saw, is distractedly enamoured with Mrs. Stanley. — A sudden flight, I deem. — His passion exceeds all bounds. — Oh it will prove an excellent foundation for the scheme I have in embryo! — Leave me to build the edifice which may perhaps excite the wonder of shallow creatures, who know not what revenge will urge a daring soul to perform. — At present, I cannot explain myself, as
the

the plot depends upon a concatenation of circumstances which time alone can ripen. Till that period, I am determined, by the most circumspect behaviour, to gain the confidence of this family. Even the ancient mother of Stanley shall not be neglected. Thou wouldst laugh to hear the spirited Anna descant on the beauties of scripture with the old lady, expatiate on delicacy of sentiment with the lieutenant, and sing forth the praises of maternal tenderness with Maria. — What a complete reformation! — Oh, child, fear not my prolific brain, when I have such an important end to attain. — Bless me! I must leave my employment! — For what? you ask. — Why, to join this *sober* family in *evening prayer*! — Oh heavens, what musty notions! — The sprightly Anna kneels, with

VOL. I. E her

her sparkling eyes half closed, (created for other purposes, my girl,) while the tedious ceremony is performing. And surely never was chaplain more admired in his congregation than the master of this little household! — Oh! but one word of the colonel ('tis well I have other views) who graces the cottage with his presence. — Were it not for some certain indications of sensibility, which animate his eyes when their expressive glances are directed to the wife of his friend, I should be tempted to imagine him insensible to female charms. — Heavens, what *can* there be, in that insipid countenance, to attract the attention of a surrounding company, while the lively brunette shall sit neglected? — Marshall, Beville, and Stanley! — 'Tis too much! — I *will* have a share, and *such* a share! — O Montford, with success to thy STOCKLEY.

Colonel

Colonel BEVILLE to Mr. HUDSON.

Burton-Wood.

YOUR detention by contrary winds does honour to the old proverb. I shall certainly take advantage of the boisterous god's capriciousness, which is to me an unexpected and welcome indulgence.— From the sweet solitude of Burton-Wood thy friend transmits the familiar epistle.— But no, solitude, for a time, has fled these cheerful haunts. The cottage is, at present, a scene of rational festivity and tranquil joy. A sprightly girl and crest-fallen Marshall are, as well as myself, the inmates of this worthy family. Nor be the venerable mother of Stanley forgotten. Lively in the the winter of her age, we see what were once the attractions of this time-honoured

lady. The serene cheerfulness of her temper renders her, even at fourscore, a desirable companion. — What, not one word of the angelic Maria! — O yes, she is more adorable than ever. Her earnest assiduity to please her company evinces at once the sweet amiableness of her disposition and the exalted politeness of her manners. — I have got the better, Tom, of that — what shall I call it — *passionate affection*. Faith, I do think it was very like it, though now it is changed to reverential esteem.

You will naturally expect me to say something of the above-mentioned sprightly girl. — I do not like her, Hudson. — Her fierce black eyes seem animated with a diabolical spirit, especially when they dart their fiery beams upon the heavenly countenance of Stanley's wife: and I shrewdly

shrewdly suspect a collusion between her and Marshall; of what nature I know not. It is certainly no business of mine; I shall therefore drop the subject.

THIS delightful place will probably detain me some months. — Fear not thy Beville: the honour of a soldier shall *not* be contaminated. Stanley's fame is as dear to me as my own. It shall be the business of my life to keep both free from blemish. — Is not death a lighter evil, to a gallant spirit, than public disgrace? Why, then, should not a soldier be equally tenacious of preserving that honour, in private life, which the smallest reflection on his public character would expose to indelible shame? It is a general carelessness, in the matters I am speaking to, which has drawn upon the gentlemen of the army a stigma by no means attributable to many of them. It is

with pleasure I have observed, in several of my friends in that line, a delicacy of sentiment which would reflect honour upon the strictest professional character.

A red coat, as I have once before observed, is not without its attractions with the ladies; but, if they would divest themselves of a partiality for outside shew, the mask must soon drop, and, from a cool disquisition into the character of their formidable hero, they would be able to distinguish the man of worth from the flashy coxcomb, a matter which might prove of the utmost consequence to that amiable sex.

PERHAPS I may once more hear from my Hudson before he quits these hospitable shores. — Adieu, dear Tom. Success attend thy most sanguine wishes.

FRANCIS BEVILLE.

Mr.

Mr. HUDSON to Colonel BEVILLE.

Portsmouth.

PLEASEING assurance! — I can once more communicate to my Beville the effusions of a heart which rejoices in the friendly correspondence. But believe me, Frank, you are certainly indebted to old Boreas, whose kindness you have already acknowledged. — Short, I imagine, will be this epistle, as a favourable breeze has put in motion the languid sails, and animated our men with the enlivening hope of quitting a country so dear to them. — Strange contradiction in the human mind! — With what cheerfulness do these fellows leave a shore they will shortly express the most eager desire to visit! — A British sailor is certainly an uncommon production, for

human nature seldom exhibits such palpable contradictions. — An instance in point. — What hazards do they run? — What hardships struggle against? — How willingly endure the cruel effects of storms and tempest? — Their hearts are steeled against every emotion of fear. Show them an enemy, they prepare for battle with delight. Numbers they laugh at; wounds, nay death itself, they hold in contempt. Dangers endear them to each other; and to be fellow-sufferers in an engagement is sufficient to unite them by the the tenderest cement. Their natural aversion to a Frenchman (from motives I have not time to discuss) is insurmountable; and conquest is as much secured to them by this aversion as by their own native courage. Yet, notwithstanding this seeming ferocity, they are
in

in general tenderness itself, in domestic life. Their powerful attachment to the female sex softens and corrects that martial spirit which is so formidable to their enemies, and which proves the bulwark of their country. — I believe, upon my soul, Frank, if the same degree of unanimity prevailed, with equal strength, throughout this nation, we should yet be a match for the contending powers of Europe. — It is shocking to consider, that, while these noble fellows are struggling against slavery and dependence, the more refined, and (from their situation, we may venture to say) the more consequential, part of a nation should render their noble efforts ineffectual. It is apparent to me, notwithstanding your sanguine hopes to the contrary, that the unconstitutional measures, so often pursued
and

and adopted, must, in time, subdue the glorious effusions of patriotism in those whose eulogium I have been attempting; and then, farewell, a long farewell, to liberty, property, and every precious advantage, which has hitherto distinguished this once happy nation. — Truly may we be called *free-born Englishmen*; dearly has the envied characteristic been attained; a deluge of blood has been spilt in defence of the invaluable prerogative; and with cheerfulness are we ready still to sacrifice to this idol of British adoration. I speak for myself, and those multitudes whom no prospect of danger can deter from seeking glory “even in the cannon’s mouth.”

I have written to the last minute. — The boat is putting off. — Adieu, dear Frank,
that

that we may once more meet in honour
and happiness is the wish of

T. HUDSON.

Mr. MARSHALL to MARIA.

Burton-Wood.

WILL the excellent Mrs. Stanley permit
a wretched youth to reveal the intricacy of his situation?—Conscious how awkward and even presumptuous an application of this kind may appear, yet, depending on that lady's goodness, he ventures to lay at her feet this humble confession of his passion.—Her excessive delicacy may perhaps stifle this a criminal acknowledgement: but can those wishes be criminal which have heaven for their ultimate end?—

Can

Can that ambition be blameable which aspires to perfection? Surely, no. — Mrs Stanley must accord with my sentiments in this particular, however she may dissent from my opinion in other respects. —

FORGIVE me, O thou revered object of Marshall's hopes. — Listen with patience to the fervor of a long-restrained passion; a passion which has animated my bosom from the first moment I beheld such excellence. — Give me but friendship. — Deprive me not of your esteem. — Continue those bright emanations of goodness, those expressive smiles, which irradiate that heavenly countenance. — But ah! presumptuous Marshall! why this request? Those impassioned smiles, those bright emanations, are directed to a happier object. — Torture beyond expression! — Who can tell but
the

the very means I have now taken may deprive me of every distant hope. — Yet surely this confession, which sad necessity urges from a bleeding bosom, will not be treated with contempt. — Can Marshall be the only object incapable of exciting Maria's pity? No, I feel myself undeserving the deprecated neglect. — This then is the test. — This will prove the strength of Mrs. Stanley's esteem for the unfortunate

MARSHALL.

MARIA

MARIA to MARSHALL.

NOTHING can extenuate the atrociousness of thy crime but to fly forever the insulted *wife* of thy *guardian, friend, protector*. — I scorn to expostulate. — Stanley's consort cannot descend so low. — Just god, is it possible! — But no more. — Leave this place, if thou wouldst avoid the indignation of affronted virtue. — Cæsar's motto is my Stanley's.*

* The wife of Cæsar must not be suspected.

Mr. MARSHALL to Miss STOCKLEY.

With the preceding Note inclosed.

STOCKLEY, my noble my spirited friend, I will join hands with thee in thy glorious plan of revenge. — Deluded wretch, to suppose she would descend so low as Marshall ! — Curse on the haughtiness of virtue. — Curse on the keen upbraidings, the animated threats, of the proud Maria. — Where is the angelic mildness I so much admired ? Not in the inclosed note. —

Why *let* her inform her husband of my ungovernable passion. Even that disclosure shall not save her. Shall she escape the severity of her fate whose fall is doomed by Stockley and her faithful adherent ? — No, by my disappointed wishes, I swear revenge.

venge.—Dearest Anna, continue thy plausible duplicity. The mask is highly necessary. The banished Marshall has dropt it too soon.—Yes, she has commanded my departure, or I had communicated this precious intelligence to my friend personally. Adieu; let me know, as soon as possible, what effect my absence has produced upon the several inmates of Burton-wood. —

MARSHALL.

MARIA

MARIA STANLEY to Lady TREVOR.

Burton Wood.

ISABEL, thou wilt weep for thy wretched friend. — All these pleasing prospects, once so delightful, are enveloped in clouds of darkness, if not totally destroyed. — Unconscious of the shadow of evil, I can scarcely bear the scrutinising eye of Stanley, which seems to explore my inmost soul. — And why not explore it? — Is there aught I would conceal from the master of my affection? — O yes, there is something, a black and guilty secret, which must still remain undiscovered to my husband. — Warmly tenacious of his honour, can I tell him that honour has been attempted in the person of his wife? — I shudder at the

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dreadful consequences which would flow from the horrid disclosure. — And yet the bare knowledge of such a crime, though but intended, strikes my mind with a sense of shame. — 'Tis to Marshall, my dearest friend, I am indebted for my present misery. — That wretch has dared to confess that the *wife* of his only friend is the object of his illiberal passion. — Inclosed is the confession of his guilt, and my answer. — Silent contempt should have marked my sense of his villainy; but, fearful lest that silence might imply the least toleration of his infamous baseness, I ventured, in those few lines, to express my sense of his unprecedented ingratitude. — May they be efficacious! — One salutary effect has already resulted from them: he took a hasty leave of my husband, the next morning, upon pretence

tence of extraordinary business.—May he never disturb, with his detested presence, the tranquil shades of Burton Wood. —

Miss Stockley departs the cottage this day.— She has purchased a sweet rural habitation, about twenty miles from hence.— Stanley escorts her in the chaise; the colonel attends on horseback.— A few days since, Mr. Beville declared his intention of staying sometime longer with us.— At that moment Miss Stockley cast her eye (fraught with particular meaning) on Henry; he looked displeased. I cannot investigate the cause of that solemn gloom which immediately spread over his once cheerful features. Indeed, I remember he appeared vexed at being told I solicited the colonel to protract his stay.— Surely Beville has not made overtures to Anna

G 2

Stockley.

Stockley. His behaviour has ever been respectful, but I never perceived the least tendency to an affection for that lady.— Well do I know Stanley's delicacy.— He has undoubtedly kept our former suspicions of Anna a secret from his friend.— But my husband would die rather than suffer the colonel to be deceived in a matter of such consequence.— He certainly suspects that to be the motives which induces Beville to continue at Burton-Wood, it being much nearer Thorn-Dale than London.

ADIEU, dearest Isabel, mayst thou enjoy that happiness so much thy due.

M. STANLEY.

Miss

Miss STOCKLEY to Mr. MARSHALL.

Thorn-Dale.

YOUR presence is absolutely necessary at Thorn-Dale. I want to consult you as occasions arise. Bring Clinton and his sister with you. We must keep up appearances. — By the way, that girl has a fine fortune; it may be worth your while to look after her: she will do well enough for a wife. — My character is fully established at Burton-Wood, above the possibility of suspicion. O the delightful effects of a little well-timed hypocrisy! I am exceedingly fond of sincerity when it facilitates my purpose. — But, in this case, it is intirely out of the question. — What exalted pleasure, to strike the mortal blow

so certainly, as for ever to deprive that exemplary prude of every chance of happiness, and, at the same time, so secretly, as to preclude the smallest knowledge of the person to whom she owes the vengeful stroke. I have already touched, with a delicate hand, that string which must actuate and put in motion the instrument of justly excited rage.—Sweetly did it vibrate, and, from a small specimen of its power, gave me to understand what a full exertion may produce.—A few days before I left Burton-Wood, strolling with Stanley in the romantic garden, we saw the colonel and Maria, enter by a side-gate—they were earnestly discoursing—I affected to draw Henry from that side of the garden.—“We will go this way, sir.”——“No, madam, this way, if you please.”——

And

And I thought he would have beat me down in his hurry to join them. — The unsuspecting pair came forward, and (give me joy, Marshall,) before they perceived us, the galled husband had the torturing satisfaction of beholding Beville eagerly kissing Maria's hand. — What a sight for a man powerfully alive to the most exalted feelings, and delicately tenacious of his honour! — He felt it, most assuredly; I saw it working in his agitated bosom. But it was I alone discovered it. — When we met, Mrs. Stanley took the arm of her husband — I joined the forsaken colonel. — Walking close behind, I heard her tell the lieutenant she had just been requesting Mr. Beville to oblige his friends with a longer stay at the cottage. — Stanley told her, in a tone she had never before heard, that was

his business not *hers*.—Poor Maria shrunk, as it were, into herself, nor did she articulate another syllable during the walk.—In the evening, the lieutenant and myself being left in the parlour, he asked me suddenly, “Where is the colonel?”—“I believe, sir, in the front court, with “Mrs. Stanley.”—(By the way, *she* was gone to attend the old lady to her repose.) He started and looked angry.—I left the room, and, meeting Maria in the hall, took her with me into the court, where I knew Beville was walking.—We were soon joined by Stanley, who spoke little, but seemed to watch every motion.—With such a mind as his, these small occurrences will indicate something extraordinary; thou art well assured my assistance will not be wanting to give force to his suspicions.

—I

— I might have spared this trouble, but time now creeps with leaden feet. — I shall only make this observation. — There is no chance of succeeding, in your design or mine, till that couple are separated. — Distress alone can bend her stubborn soul : and let me hope disappointment will secure the affections of the noble lieutenant to his *then* transcendently happy

ANNA STOCKLEY.

MARIA

MARIA STANLEY to Lady TREVOR.

Burton Wood.

A MAZEMENT chills the wretched Maria! — That faithful that affectionate husband is — O my God! — is, I fear, a prey to some dire suspicion. — Where are those enraptured smiles, those tender expressions, those soft overflowings of a most passionate affection? — Gloomy reverse! A frowning aspect, short hasty answers, and a cold distant behaviour, are now dealt to thy friend with a liberal hand. Surely some fiend of destruction has acquainted him with Marraill's odious passion, and he is justly offended with his wife for the undue concealment. — I will tell him. I will discover the whole of that iniquitous

iniquitous transaction. — But will not that appear like guilt? Will it not imply a suspicion that I thought something wrong in my conduct, and wished to extenuate the fault by a confession so much to my dishonour? And, should he be ignorant of that humiliating circumstance, may not the disclosure produce the most terrifying effects? —

“ SUPREME Disposer of my fate, teach
 “ me to recover the alienated affections of
 “ my Henry! The purity of my heart is
 “ well known to thee, thou omniscient
 “ Lord of all! With thee must thy af-
 “ flicted servant’s cause remain.” —

JUDGE of that misery, my Iliad, which can thus dictate, in the bitterness of grief, the solemn apostrophe. — Suspence is excruciating. Soon may it terminate. — Our
 revered

revered mother sighs and weeps. Her venerable countenance expresses the situation of her sympathising heart. — The colonel walks dejected, melancholy, silent.—This once-happy family seeks a gloomy solitude, and the loved recesses of Burton-Wood are dedicated to heart-struck sorrow and pining grief. — Dearest lady Trevor, am I never more to hear from you? Speak comfort, I intreat you, if possible, to the wretched

M. STANLEY.

Miss

Miss STOCKLEY to Mrs. MONTFORD.

Thorn-Dale.

MY last * informed my dear Jane of several interesting particulars respecting the situation of her Anna. I shall now proceed to tell her, I have practised a master-piece of finessè on the dear dupe of our glorious designs. —

The colonel and Stanley rode over, a few days since, to visit the happy Stockley. — Alas! happy in that transient interview! — I took the lieutenant into the garden, under the pretence of shewing him the state of our lately-planned improvements. The colonel attended. Walking rather behind, I took the opportunity of catching up a sealed letter, which fell (as I wished Stanley

* This letter does not appear.

ley to imagine) from Beville's pocket. I looked at the direction, and betrayed evident marks of confusion. Henry flew to me, and endeavoured to get the important prize. I held up my hand for him to be silent. — The colonel, by this time, had walked to some distance, inattentive to the contest. — After a faint struggle, I gave up the wished-for letter. He hastily took and retired to read it. A solecism in politeness which Stanley would have detested, had not his mind received a taint which destroyed every thought of superficial ceremony in his disturbed bosom. — Oh! it will work sweetly, no doubt. — Take the copy of it.

“ BEVILLE

“ BEVILLE to MARIA.

“ I AM truly sensible of my error. —
“ Forgive me, my excellent friend. —
“ Beville ought not to be reminded of cir-
“ cumspction, conscious how necessary a
“ strict observance is at present. — I have
“ much to say, but dare not commit the
“ important business to paper. Perhaps
“ to-morrow morning may afford an op-
“ portunity for explanation. Till when
“ adieu! adieu!”

Mrs STOCKLEY in Continuation.

STANLEY cannot accuse his wife in *this*
business: for the paper being sealed
argues

argues her ignorant of the contents.—
But think you it will not increase the
flame which began, before this, to raise
its towering influence? — Yes, yes, my
friend, I shall soon enjoy the fruits of my
industry. Adieu.

A. STOCKLEY.

M.

Mr. MARSHALL to Lieut. STANLEY.

FROM the beautiful retreat of Thorn-Dale your obliged Marshall addresses his excellent friend. — In compliance with a polite invitation from Miss Stockley, I have accompanied Miss Clinton and her brother to pass some weeks in this pleasing retirement. — I need not point out to you (who know the place) the various beauties of the enchanting environs. — The fine taste which predominates in Miss Stockley's choice will soon render Thorn-Dale by no means inferior to the surrounding scenes. — But, my dear sir, this charming woman enjoys not her distinguished lot; she weeps, and is wretched. — Solitude is her delight, to that she betrays an eager propensity when

her interesting conversation can be dispensed with by this agreeable party. — Yesterday evening, our company being upon a visit, she sat pensive and silent. I ventured to interrogate her upon that melancholy which over-shadowed the once-cheerful brow. — She burst into tears, and said, “ O Marshall, I foresee a deluge of
“ evils ready to fall upon the excellent
“ Stanley.” — I started. — “ For heaven’s
“ sake, madam, explain yourself.” —
“ Impossible. — I cannot. — Soon will the
“ horrid mystery be developed.” — She left the room in an agony of grief. — What can she mean ? — I dare not give way to the horrors of a prophetic imagination.

Lady

Lady TREVOR to MARIA.

Paris.

SWEET amiable sufferer! — Is it possible thy husband can be blind to the traces of virtue itself, which predominate in Maria's every action and shine visibly triumphant in her modest eye? — My dearest love, thy Henry cannot continue in the gross delirium. — It must not be, that Stanley, the penetrating Stanley, shall be thus deceived. — Hell itself cannot furnish a testimony against Maria's innocence. — Soon shall the execrable designs of thine enemies be frustrated. — O my God! is it possible Maria Stanley should have *enemies*? — Can that sweet philanthropist excite any passions in the human breast but love and

H 2 admiration?

admiration? — Painful truth! too surely some diabolic spirit, jealous of such distinguished felicity, has actuated the breast of hardened wickedness to ruin an angel. — But no. — Their base intentions shall yet be counteracted. — Continue, my love, thy habitual mildness, thy sweet submission to the will of fate, and all this intricate mischief shall yet be explained.

STRANGER as thy unsuspecting temper is to the pangs of jealousy, thou mayest well lament its pernicious effects. But, my dearest, there is no passion productive of such violent inconsistencies, or so much tortures the perturbed bosom, as that baneful fiend. — Wonder not I so freely use the word. — Isabel has penetration enough to discover that nothing less could exasperate the mind of a Stanley to such an excess.

Shocking

Shocking it must be, in such a situation, to dissemble. — But, my loved Maria, try to smooth the ruffled brow, and calm, if possible, that inward anxiety which well I know discovers its cruel effects on thine honest countenance. — You will, it is probable, by these means, investigate the latent cause, and find out the cruel author of this infernal mischief. O that my tedious probation were at an end ; then would your Isabel, in conjunction with your excellent mother, endeavour to alleviate the sorrows which bear so hard upon thy delicate frame. Adieu, dearest Maria.

Lieut. STANLEY to Mr. MARSHALL.

LONG will it be ere Marshall shall behold the wretched Stanley. — Driven from the intercourse of social friends, he must now commence a desolate wanderer. — William, I am distracted. — The infamous colonel! — Can I speak the rest? Can I accuse the wife of my bosom? — But she is *not* my wife. — I will cast her off. — Read the inclosed, and wonder at my patience. — It is not the first proof of their guilt.

MARIA

MARIA STANLEY *to* Mr. BEVILL.

“ You were wrong, my friend, in sup-
 “ posing I could endure, with patience,
 “ your absence from Burton-Wood. —
 “ Little do you know the sentiments of
 “ Maria, when you imagine she can give
 “ up such a pleasure. — But I must chide.
 “ — Why will you terrify me, with your
 “ affiduities, in my mother’s, and even in
 “ Stanley’s, presence? — Already do they
 “ look displeased. — Be cautious, as you
 “ value the friendship, I had almost said
 “ affection, of

MARIA

H 4

STANLEY

STANLEY in Continuation.

MARSHALL, do not surprise and sorrow almost suspend your mental faculties, at this horrid disclosure of Stanley's shame?— But six short weeks.— Damned dissembling perfidy.— Who could look on that angel face and suppose it to be the mask of a corrupted heart?— Who can trace the whole of her behaviour, since the hour in which, with unaffected modesty, she blushing gave me her hand, and give credit to the shocking assertion?— But I can swear to the writing.— The letter was found in Beville's pocket.— No matter by whom.— Marshall, I will soon leave England.— The climate is hateful.— But first, revenge.— Yes, great revenge, in bloody

bloody characters, shall proclaim my injury and her shame. — O Beville ! how have I deserved this from thee ! Friendship, sacred love and friendship, Francis and Maria have for ever blasted. — Had the blow been aimed but at the life of Stanley, it would have been trifling. — But to stab my domestic peace, to poison all the sweet enjoyments of tranquil happiness, it was too much. —

STANLEY.

Mr.

Mr. MARSHALL to Lieut. STANLEY.

Thorn-Dale.

AND does my afflicted friend think the faithful Marshall worthy his sacred confidence? — Never shall it be abused. — I dare not enter into the subject of his heart-wounding grief. — Suffice it to say, my soul is penetrated with his undeserved distress. — The sweet Anna, with flowing tears, laments her Henry's sufferings. — For, O my dear sir, she has long suspected the cause of your melancholy. — And shall I confess, her secret passion has at last revealed itself. — She pines to see the unhappy Stanley. — “ Let him come, (she says,) to Thorn-Dale; our affiduities may, perhaps, suspend, for a moment, “ the

“ the harrowing thoughts of ” — There
she stops. — But no pen can do justice to
her excessive feelings. — To her tender in-
treaties are added those of thy

MARSHALL.

Miss

Miss STOCKLEY to the Same.

Thorn-Dale.

C RUEL Marshall has extracted the secret from my bleeding bosom. — I would have concealed the rankling trouble. — Deep in this festering heart I would have concealed it. — Torture should not have drawn it from me. — The prying eye of friendship has discovered it. — Dear worthy Stanley, my sufferings are not to be compared with thine. — But yet, methinks, thou givest too much way to galling suspicion. — Consider coolly. — Compare causes with effects. — Pardon me, sir, I mean not to dictate. — Impartial justice compels me to favour the yet-happy Maria. — O she is happy indeed! — 'Tis true, for *such* a husband

band none can be too circumspect. Some women are more liberal in their behaviour than others.—It is a fault I never observed in Mrs. Stanley.

The uncommon gloom, so visible in the countenances of the suspected pair, rather alarmed, but by no means terrified me. — I saw *you* noticed something amiss in them; and from that I dreaded impending evil.— When we met them in the garden, you seemed disturbed. — It is true, he kissed her hand: 'twas an act of gallantry becoming the soldier. — If she betrayed confusion at the liberty, it is attributable to excessive delicacy, which, like the sensitive plant, shrinks from the licentious hand.— We will grant, the colonel was uncommonly attentive. — Maria's attractions may well excuse a fine young gentleman for his
sedulous

sedulous attention, in a tender and agreeable tête-a-tête. — We will suppose the worst. — 'Tis impossible a mind, formed upon virtuous principles, can continue long in the fascinating delirium. — But I hate myself for the horrid supposition. — Oh ! there is one whose constancy would have been proof against every temptation, had she been so happy. — Pray excuse me, Stanley. — Try a few days absence, it may perhaps bring about an eclaireissement. Do, make the experiment, if you can bear the presence of unhappy

STOCKLEY.

Miss

Mrs STOCKLEY to Mrs. MONTFORD.

Thorn Dale.

READ the copy of my letter to Stanley, and confess it to be worthy of thy friend. — If it should not increase his suspicion of Maria I will give up all my skill in prescience. — Let the poor timid fool (who, frightened by that bug-bear, conscience, keeps within the cold limits of cautious prudence) wonder at my daring impetuosity, which, like the raging land-floods, bears down all opposition. O God! the thoughts of conquering that stubborn heart sets my soul in a blaze. — I languish for the full fruition of my warmly-conceived hopes. — Observe me, Jane, the conquest would be but half achieved unless

I could, at the same time, sink the detested Maria even below contempt. — She shall not triumph over the neglected Anna. — Serene in all her boasted innocence, she shall yet find her blameless character will not blunt the barbed arrows of calumny, which justly-excited revenge points to her inmost soul. — She deprived me of the noblest fellow existing, and I *will* return the *compliment*. — It is my positive opinion, (so forgiving are the hearts of this uncommon pair,) that, were they to know I had deprived them of a plentiful fortune, (which, thanks to my fertile brain, you know, was the case,) I might now, by the smallest concession, obtain a free pardon. — What milk-and-water constitutions! — How unlike Stockley's heroic spirit, which rises in proportion to the injury it receives —
and

and crushes even to the earth the abject wretch that presumes but to think of offending a woman so exalted.—Marshall begins already to disrelish my plan.—But *let him now retract if he dare.*—

STOCKLEY.

Lieut. STANLEY to Mr. MARSHALL.

Burton-Wood.

MARSHALL, the horrid facts are now incontestible. — I have received maddening proofs of the deepest treachery. — Heart-wounding truth! — She is false, William; false as the infernal deep. — In that rural summer-house, constructed (as I vainly imagined) for happier purposes, I caught her. — Caught her with the colonel; — tears streaming down her perfidious face; — (yes, she can weep, —) while every mark of the deepest concern stood confessed on his! — God, what a moment! — Guilt — conscious guilt — petrified the unhardened sinner. — At my voice she trembled, and sunk insensible. —

A

A short time must now decide the fate of Stanley and colonel Beville. — I have sent a challenge, — the natural consequence of such a glaring detection. Should success attend Beville's arm, do thou protect and justify the character of

STANLEY.

Mrs STOCKLEY to Mrs. MONTFORD

MONTFORD, I have kindled a flame that will consume every hope of that happiness I once promised myself.—Stanley may be this moment breathing his last.—From me the cursed blow derives its force.—'Tis Anna points the weapon to his generous heart.—Not content with ruining his fortune, I must practice upon his peace;—plant arrows in the breast of him I would *now* die to save.—My bosom is a chaos of despair.—Ha!—I hear him groan!—Again the terrifying sounds, with echoing horror, strike the ear of conscious guilt!—Perhaps at this tremendous instant he dies, imprecating curses on the hideous monster who has blasted his blooming hopes.—

And

And who is that monster?—Not his wife: Oh! she is happy beyond conception; she has not murdered Stanley!—

But did I say *curse*? O no, he will not; the noble philanthropist cannot curse.—
—Ha! Marshall, what news? Is he safe? The life or death of wretched Anna hangs on thy lips.—But alas no certainty.—Marshall flew to Ellen with the inclosed note. The poor creature has answered it to the best of her power.—But her intelligence abates not my distress.—Again I have dispatched Marshall to find, if possible, unhappy Stanley.—Montford, would this haughty spirit permit, I would ask thee to pity the miserable

STOCKLEY.

MARIA STANLEY to Lady TREVOR.

Burton Wood.

NEVER let frail humanity form to itself a prospect of durable felicity. —The fine-spun cobweb schemes of mortal happiness, when touched by the hand of almighty power, vanish to their original nothing, and leave nought behind but the mortifying proof of the inefficacious attempt! —

Who had a greater claim to durable felicity than Henry and Maria? Were not their days distinguished by every mark of affectionate kindness? —Love and friendship lent their softest influence to crown the joys of connubial bliss. Their souls were framed for each other. What one
deemed

deemed pleasure both truly enjoyed.—But mark the change.—A bitter change for miserable Maria.—Sweet Isabel, the English language affords not terms expressive of my sorrows!—O my venerable mother,—my innocent child,—your Stanley has brought disgrace upon us all.—Isabel, that husband whom I idolized suspects his wife.—Do I live to hear my conduct arraigned?—Yes, Henry, if to love thee almost to adoration, if to think thy merit transcends all praise, be blameable, then is Maria highly deserving censure.—

Last night, accompanied only by our excellent mother, I explored the solemn shades that surround the cottage.—In the midst of this delightful recess, my husband constructed a small summer-house, and furnished it with a charming piano-

forte, for the amusement of his once happy wife. Painful remembrance!—

“Will Maria (said my venerable compa-
“nion) touch those harmonious strings,

“and sooth the oppressive melancholy

“which, alas! gains ground upon debili-

“tated age.”—Who could withstand this

sweet request? I kissed away the trembling

drops of pity which streamed (for wretched

Maria) along the furrowed cheek, and sat

down to the instrument.—The moon just

then arose full on the window, and shed

an interrupted light thro’ a luxuriant jessa-

mine, whose tender branches vibrated with

the evening breeze. The solemn sounds

received additional melody from the plain-

tive notes of several night ngales dispersed

among the trees, and the rapid foamings

of a distant stream completed, with its

awful base, the pleasing concert.—Inex-

pressible

preffible were my feelings. I paused;—went on;—stopped;—again renewed the lulling sounds;—and felt, at that solemn moment, the rapturous advantage of a satisfied conscience; nor would I have exchanged, for one hour, my situation with injurious treachery.—Isabel, I felt a foretaste of heaven's eternal bliss.—The soothing harmony lulled even misery to peace, and sorrow itself was, for the time, suspended.——

Our pleasing entertainment was interrupted by a message to my mother. She left me, and I renewed my sadly-sweet employment.—In a few minutes the colonel entered.—The sight of him, who I now suspect to be the cause of Stanley's misery, occasioned the most painful sensations. He looked confused.—“ I thought, “ madam, Mr. Stanley was here; and I
“ came

“ came to take a long farewell.—Never
“ will the felicitous hours I have passed at
“ Burton-Wood be erased from my mind.
“ —May returning happiness bless my
“ honoured friends, and may your husband
“ soon awaken to the transcendent
“ merit of his inestimable wife.”——

My spirits, sunk with various troubles, could not stand this affecting address.—I burst into a flood of tears, which prevented my articulation, and some moments passed ere I could wish him happiness. He bowed upon my hand.—At that awful period entered—Stanley!—O Isabel, do you not feel for me? Never shall I forget his tremendous appearance.—Fire seemed to flash from his eyes; his face like what we are told of a haggard spectre; and every distorted feature convulsed with agony.—

He

He advanced towards me, — retreated, — again advanced, — retired; — then, turning hastily, he stamped with his foot, and, applying one hand to his side, as if aiming to draw a sword, which providentially was not there, he thundered, with a dreadful voice, — “Woman, be gone. — How darest thou continue in the presence of an injured husband?” — It was enough; the blasting lightening could not produce a more instantaneous effect. — I fell senseless at his feet. — Would to God that bitter moment had terminated my life and sorrows.

O lady Trevor, since that hour, I have not seen my deceived Henry. — A retrospect of the horrid scene again overpowers the wretched

MARIA.

Miss

Mrs STOCKLEY to ELLEN BATEMAN.*

SEND me word immediately if Stanley is at Burton-wood, or if the colonel is gone from thence.—You have acted your part to a miracle, respecting the letter. But I wish to know how you managed last night's transaction.—Inclosed is the money I promised.—

A. STOCKLEY.

* Enclosed in the letter to Mrs. Montford, p. 116

Ellen

ELLEN BATEMAN to Miss STOCKLEY.

MADDEM,

Turns you a milyon of thenks for al
your kindenes and will tel you evere
thing I nows.—And ferst aboute the leter,
becorse I thinks you loves to no every
thing —The curnel was like for to ketch
me wen I put the leter in his cote pockit,
but howfomdever I did it at last, and then
I carris it to my master, under pretending
that it was his cote, and so the leter hangs
out of the pockit, and I fais, “ Lord, if
“ here isent the vere leter my misters lont
“ to the curnel.” And so my master takes
it from me, and gon me the cote; but mind
ye he keepes the ritin. And so last nite I
gos to my misers, “ Lord, marm, why dont
“ you

“you wark oute, I thinks as how a wark
“wil du you gude.” And so whot does she
du but takes the ould ladey whith her.
Now I was mortall mad, becorse I thorte she
wudent be alone.—Howsumdever, I follors
them, and behould ye tha went to the
wood. Well, then I goes to the footman
and tould him to fetch the ould ladey.
Then I acquaintid the curnel my master
wonted him in the summer-house.—Wel,
then I tould my master as how I fancied
my misters wonted him, becorse I feed
her and the curnel go into the wood.
Wel, he axed me no qestehons, but runs
awa as if—Lord a marcy how he did run!
—And so presently in cumes the curnel
with a face as long as my arm, and bids
me go, for my ladey was in fits; and so
she was, thats tru enuf. Well, I was in

a fine

a fine quandare, and the culd ladey cride
 purdiguſſy, and my maſter and the curnel
 went awa that nite, but not togthur,
 mind ye. Wel, I went by the parler dore,
 and there wos my maſter, ſtomp^{ing} like
 a madman; and he tauk'd to himſelf, and
 ſade ſumthink aboute damed purjurus vil-
 len. Lord a mitey, I wiſhed myſelf fur-
 der, and Wm luk'd as pale as my apurn,
 and ſade he was ſure as how ſumboddy
 had tould life of maddim, and if it was
 his owne farther he'd ſtik him alive.—
 Graſius bles me, how I trimbeld!—Pra,
 maddem, forgive my bouldneſs, for I
 doſent no how to rite to ſich a grate ladey.
 —But indede Wilyem ſas as how I am a
 mortall gude ſcrib. Lord nows wot he
 menes, for I am ſhure I doſent. So I ſhal
 now reſt your reſpectable dutiful ſervent

ELLEN BATEMEN.

Poſte

Poste crip. Wilyem fas that my marster
and the curnel quorreld, he beleved, for
he fas as how my marster wuddent se the
curnel whene he went awa; and so the
kurnel cride and ringd his hands, like
any think betwottled. O and he left a
mort of munney for the sarvants, and
Wilyem brote my shere.—'Tis a vere
ævel yung man, for the matter of that.

Mrs. STANLEY, Sen. to Mr. STANLEY.

HENRY, on her aged knees a mother writes.—Fourscore years of happiness have gone their peaceful round, undisturbed by aught but those evils which are the lot of humanity.—But, at the last period of worn-out life, Stanley has planted daggers in the trembling bosom of palsied age.—My son, thy wife is innocent; she is chaste as angels.—Listen to me, thou much-deceived self-tormentor.—Yes, I may well call HIM so, who, in defiance of the unerring testimony which spotless truth and blameless innocence afford, can cast away such inconceivable felicity.—

Never has calumny dared to glance at thy mother's name.—Well thou knowest,
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I ever held life as nothing, if it must be purchased by the forfeiture of unblemished character. — Surely, then, my testimony may be trusted. — Such is my confidence in Maria's virtue, that I will support her fame to the latest hour of existence. — Forsake not a faultless wife, an ancient mother, a lovely babe. — Return to peace and Burton-wood. — O there is an enemy to thy repose. — Trace him to the confines of the habitable globe, ere thou condemnest an injured woman, and leavest the child of thy tenderest affection to struggle against undeserved infamy. Adieu.

S. STANLEY.

MARIA

MARIA STANLEY to Lieutenant STANLEY.

CONSCIOUS virtue impels the injured Maria to sue for justification to a defamed husband.—Conscious virtue enables her to demand an explanation of that husband's mysterious conduct.—She would expostulate, but with whom?—The defamer of her (till now) unspotted character.—And who is that defamer?—O dreadful truth,—'tis—Stanley!—The generous benevolent Stanley!—He whose heart (I fondly thought) was open to every tale of woe; whose sympathising soul participates those distresses friendship could not heal!—He it is who has wounded the fame of a guiltless wife, embittered the remaining hours of an invaluable parent,

and marked the future days of helpless infancy with indelible disgrace.—Blush, O my unhappy Henry, for thy precipitate conduct!—How canst thou leave an affectionate family to mourn the loss of him, whose beloved presence enlivened the happy society?—Remember the tranquil days, the social evenings, when, inspired by thy animating conversation, each joy-illuminated countenance expressed the sweetest satisfaction.—Behold us now,—drooping, — silent, — miserable. — Ah! couldst thou, at this painful moment, view the heart-piercing change, even Henry must own that “never was sorrow like our sorrow.” O Stanley, desert not thy

MARIA.

THE END OF VOL. I.

T O T H E
S U B S C R I B E R S
T O
B U R T O N - W O O D .

LADIES *and* GENTLEMEN,

DEEPLY impressed with a lively sense
of the favours the author has received
from her numerous subscribers, she cannot
restrain the effusions of a grateful heart,
which prompts her to acknowledge, in
this public manner, the greatness of the
obligation.

obligation.—Without their friendly assistance she would have found it extremely difficult to accomplish the arduous task:—with it, she is enabled to try the success of a first attempt, — and the favour of a generous public. — She finds herself truly sensible, that benefits of this nature require every return the most exalted gratitude can offer or liberality expect.—Emboldened by the notice of partial friends, she can look up to them with sentiments of grateful acknowledgement for their unmerited kindness.—She perfectly understands,—that a sense of benefits conferred can never degrade, but will rather exalt, the person obliged.—It is with pride and pleasure she beholds herself honoured by such a number

ber

ber of respectable names as graces her poor performance.—May *that* performance not *disgrace* those respectable names.—This will she insist upon,—that, whether it merit praise or blame, *it is all her own*; and upon herself intirely must she take the consequence of that impartial criticism it will probably excite.—

She is certainly aware, that works of this kind, from the numbers of them, have become much neglected by those whose suffrage is worth obtaining.—But let it be remembered, she has, in some little degree, deviated from the beaten track of novel-writing.—

That novel-writing should be disregarded is not to be wondered at, when it is considered,

considered, how many heavy uninteresting pieces have been introduced under that title. But there are undoubtedly numbers of them strongly marked with sense, elegance, and spirit. — It is certainly much practised, now, to convey instruction by essays; a common mode of producing to the world exalted and useful sentiments. — But the author is free to confess, she believes the same sentiment, when put proceeding from the mouth of the heroine of a novel, will act with greater force, upon a youthful mind, than when it is perused merely as the work of an author. And the fate of a favourite object will naturally enforce those sentiments with greater strength than when there is nothing more to recommend

commend them than their own excellence. When reading an affecting story, the passions are consequently engaged, which produces such an interest in favour of the subject as consequently will work most forcibly upon a juvenile reader, who (if possessed of a sensible mind) powerfully feels the force of those precepts by which the heroine forms her conduct.

Vice will most assuredly increase in its deformity when contrasted with its opposite; and a Stockley's crimes appear with horror while the virtues of a Maria are suffering by their baseness. Might the author venture upon so great an example, she would refer to that unerring pattern which has been held forth, by the great

Teacher

Teacher of mankind, who sought to convey instruction by parable rather than precept: and the wisdom of the Orientals invariably pursued the same method.— What ought to be carefully attended to, in this kind of writing, is, to make vice black enough to be detested, and to hold forth virtue in her fairest colours. Those young people who read for amusement rather than instruction are generally too short-sighted to look up to causes for effects, and consequently it will operate more strongly upon a volatile imagination to behold the certainty of retribution in this life, than to carry their expectations beyond the grave for rewards and punishments. — Had Beville and Maria been sacrificed

crificed to Stockley's vileness, it might possibly impress tender minds with horror for the cause, without feeling an inclination to a *that* time ivirtue which met so harsh a fate.——

How far these sentiments will accord with those readers who may honour this piece with their attention—must be left to their better understanding. — With every good wish for the happiness of her subscribers, the author remains

Their most obedient

Devoted servant.

